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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6331

BILL NUMBER: SB 343

NOTE PREPARED: Nov 30, 2005

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Discharge of Long-Term Inmates.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Bowser

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: X **GENERAL**
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State

Summary of Legislation: This bill requires the Department of Correction to provide for an automatic, one-time review of a long-term inmate's sentence to determine whether the inmate has been rehabilitated and has suitable plans that would warrant discharge from custody.

Effective Date: July 1, 2006.

Explanation of State Expenditures: Depending on the decisions made by the sentence review panel, this bill may reduce the number of offenders in Department of Correction (DOC) facilities in the long term and increase the number of offenders who may need to be supervised on parole. Operations of a review panel may involve some meeting and travel reimbursement costs based on panel membership as determined by the DOC.

As of November 21, 2005, there were 189 offenders who had been imprisoned in DOC facilities for 25 years or longer (as specified in the bill). Of these, 133 were reported to have either a high school diploma or a GED, one of the criteria that DOC may consider when deciding to grant an early release. Other criteria DOC may consider include, but are not limited to, a good conduct history during confinement, assurance of suitable living quarters when the offender is released, and proof of job offers from local employers where the offender would reside. Depending on the number of offenders who are released, the state could save between \$1,825 and \$21,514 per year per offender.

The average cost of \$1,825 would apply if only a few offenders are released due to this provision. This amount represents the cost of housing offenders in existing facilities with no additional staff, and avoiding having to provide medicines, food, and clothing for these offenders who are released. If a significant number of offenders

are released, the state could save as much as \$20,977 per offender. This savings can occur if DOC facilities can avoid adding new personnel, including correctional officers, program staff, and other support staff, as well as avoiding having to provide food, clothing, and medicines for these offenders.

More offenders being released may increase parole expenses if more sex offenders are released early and need to be supervised. Under IC 35-50-6-1(d), sex offenders may be assigned parole supervision for up to ten years. Of these 135 offenders with either a high school diploma or a GED, ten were committed for a sex crime. (The number of adult offenders on parole was 7,836 offenders on September 1, 2005, as compared to 2,748 adults in 1995). As of November 2005, 68 parole agent positions were filled and 4 positions were vacant.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures:

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Correction.

Local Agencies Affected:

Information Sources: Offenders in DOC facilities on November 21, 2005.

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